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Agenda item 37 (a)

STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE: STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF EMERGENCY HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, India, Ireland, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Monaco, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Senegal, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Tajikistan, Tunisia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uruguay: revised draft resolution

Participation of volunteers, "White Helmets", in activities of the United Nations in the field of humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and technical cooperation for development

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolutions 46/182 of 19 December 1991, in particular, the guiding principles embodied in the annex thereto, 47/168 of 22 December 1992 and 48/57 of 14 December 1993,

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 1993/205 of 12 February 1993 and the agreed conclusions of the coordination segment of the Council of 1993, 1/ as well as Council decision 1994/291 of July 1994,

Recalling also its resolutions 45/264 of 13 May 1991 and 48/162 of 20 December 1993,

Recognizing, in the light of the increasing number and growing magnitude and complexity of natural disasters and other emergencies, the need to utilize fully the national potential of countries in providing the United Nations, on a stand-by basis, with support for its activities in the area of humanitarian emergency assistance, as well as in the promotion of a smooth transition from relief to rehabilitation, reconstruction and development,

Also recognizing the importance of enhancing the national capacity of countries in disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness, as well as the importance of eradication of poverty in developing countries, in order to reduce their vulnerabilities,

Welcoming national initiatives, such as the establishment of a national volunteer corps called "White Helmets", undertaken in order to strengthen the stand-by capacity of developing countries, to support the United Nations activities in the area of humanitarian emergency assistance, as well as in the promotion of a smooth transition from relief to rehabilitation, reconstruction and development,

Recognizing the role of the United Nations Volunteers, including in the mobilization of resources oriented towards the provision of humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and technical cooperation for development,

1. Notes with satisfaction the initiatives undertaken by the international community in order to facilitate quick and adequate response to humanitarian emergencies and to provide effective support to the rehabilitation and development efforts of affected countries;

2. Encourages voluntary national and regional actions aimed at providing the United Nations system, on a stand-by basis, with specialized human and technical resources for emergency relief and rehabilitation, and, in this regard, notes with satisfaction the establishment, in particular in developing countries, of national volunteer corps;

3. Also encourages those national volunteer corps to develop the appropriate capabilities in order to cooperate, at the field level and in their respective area of expertise, with the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations, in accordance with the relevant provisions of resolution 46/182 and other relevant United Nations resolutions;

1/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/48/3/Rev.1), chap. III.

4. Invites Governments to promote at the national level the development of innovative financial mechanisms to fund these national stand-by capacities, by involving, inter alia, the private sector;

5. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Economic and Social Council at its next substantive session incorporating the views expressed by Governments and appropriate intergovernmental organizations and relevant entities within the United Nations system, in particular the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and the United Nations Volunteers, on ways and means of strengthening national and regional stand-by arrangements, including the establishment and full utilization of national volunteer corps, in the area of emergency humanitarian assistance, as well as in the promotion of a smooth transition from relief to rehabilitation, reconstruction and development, taking into account existing mandates and activities of the United Nations system;

6. Invites the Secretary-General, in this context, to include in his report for consideration at the next substantive session of the Economic and Social Council the results of his assessment of the potentials of:

(a) The provision by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and the United Nations Volunteers of coordination for activities to be undertaken by national volunteer corps, including the supportive role of the Resident Coordinator at the country level;

(b) The establishment of a distinct window within the Special Voluntary Fund of the United Nations Volunteers for channelling funds for operational purposes;

(c) The use of databases within the United Nations system to coordinate and facilitate the rapid provision of assistance by national volunteer corps to the United Nations system;

(d) Experiences at the national level with regard to, inter alia, selection and training, deployment, status and security, and the effective utilization of stand-by arrangements;

7. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session on the implementation of the present resolution, in the context of his annual report on strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations, in accordance with resolution 46/182.